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THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

BY PROFESSOR W. T. ALLISON, M. A., PH. D.

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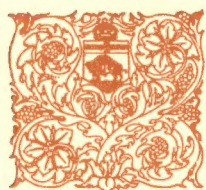
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THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

BY
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OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
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BEING A LECTURE DELIVERED AUGUST 9, 1921
TO THE
CONFERENCE OF WESTERN JOURNALISTS
AT THE
MANITOBA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
WINNIPEG



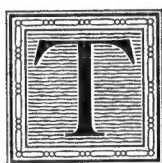
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The History of Journalism



THE fifty thousand or so newspapers in the world to-day are built upon a quality of the human mind that revealed itself with distressing effects in the garden of Eden. Adam and Eve and all their children are incurably curious. Hence the universal and age-long greeting, "What's new"? And to meet this query there came what we call journalism—publishers, editors, reporters, printers, presses, linotype machines, pulp mills, and a marvellous system of distribution of newspapers which sows countries and continents with the record of daily events.

The collection and distribution of news has made such strides during the last half century, and especially during the last twenty years, that the history of journalism, my subject for this evening, would require many hours of talk to do it justice. Consequently, in the brief time at my disposal, I can touch only the high spots.

The first observation I wish to make is this,—Journalism existed long before the issue of the first printed journal. As far as our western civilization is concerned, Julius Caesar was the first journalist and the first war

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

correspondent. Every school boy is familiar with the despatches which he composed when he was campaigning in Gaul and Britain. They are models of compact writing, but I am afraid that if Julius were attached to the staff of a modern paper he would have to limber up his style or he would lose his job. One of his despatches, however, made a great hit with the Roman public, and has stuck in the minds of the dumbest Latin scholars of the ages. It is possibly the shortest war despatch ever filed, for it consists of three words; in up-to-date newspaper language it might be called a flash,—that is if the wires had been up in Caesar's day,—“Veni, vidi, vici”. It was a model of conciseness, that message, but it said everything that was necessary, and it produced a sensation when it was bulletined at Rome.

Julius Caesar may be considered the father of Roman journalism because one of his first acts after he became Consul in 60 B.C. was to issue a decree that reports of the proceedings of the Senate should be written and published daily. The result was the establishment of *Acta Diurna* (*The Daily Acts*). This daily compilation was published in two ways,—first on a whitened board, which was hung up in the forum, and, second, on scrolls of parchment, the items being copied by slaves. In addition to political news, this written newspaper carried birth and death notices, financial items, receipts of taxes, and, of course, military intelligence. In its written form it had a limited circulation in the homes of senators and state officials. A very important feature was news of the civil and criminal courts, and special attention was given to the doings of Julius Caesar. Both Julius Caesar and his successor, the

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

Emperor Augustus, knew how to work the press. The Romans, however, were not satisfied with the somewhat limited scope of the *Acta Diurna*. Enterprising editors catered to the love of gossip in ancient Rome by publishing larger written newspapers. They scalped the *Acta Diurna* and added to its more official news the latest divorce scandals and other interesting happenings in the city, such as descriptions of the gladiatorial fights. At least one Latin author describes a Roman lady absorbed in her morning paper.

We find that written newspapers, interesting mixtures of truth and falsehood, became so popular and sensational that at a later date papal bulls had to be issued against them, and their editors were threatened with death or the galleys. But they persisted, and found their way to Venice in the fifteenth century, where they were first called gazettes from the price that was charged for them, the gazetta being a small Italian coin. In the sixteenth century such news sheets became popular in Germany, where they were first printed. By Shakespeare's day they had become quite common in England. The most famous Elizabethan editor of the weekly printed news letter was Nathaniel Butter. *The Weekly News* was Butter's title for his prints, but he sometimes issued several of his broadsides in a week, if events warranted extra editions. Butter was the first Englishman who had a nose for news. It should also be remembered that he was the first man to use the editorial "we". But poor Butter lived too long.

Early in the reign of Charles the First the severe press censorship of that tyrant pressed heavily upon Butter, and in 1641 the star chamber extinguished him. It was Arch-

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

bishop Laud who suppressed Butter, the first editor to suffer grievously in the long struggle for the liberty of the press.

Between 1643 and 1660, a very stormy period in English history, the three most notorious journalists were John Birkenhead, Marchmont Needham, and Roger L'Estrange. Birkenhead, who began his career as private secretary of Archbishop Laud, founded a royalist organ, *Mercurius Aulicus*, a court journal. Needham brought out an opposition paper, *Mercurius Britannicus*, which abounded in scurrilous abuse of the court party and lent a strong support to the Puritan cause. But Needham set a deplorable example for future editors. He must have received a large bribe from Charles the First, for Cromwell awoke one morning to find that his eloquent eulogist had taken a sharp curve and had ratted to the crown. Even after Cromwell became dictator, this renegade was a sore trial to the Puritans. They established a press censorship on purpose to suppress him, but he was so nimble in changing his residence and printing office that he succeeded in bringing out number after number of his paper for several years. On the death of Charles he changed his coat once more, again becoming a supporter of Cromwell. After the Restoration he secured a pardon from Charles the Second, flung away his pen, and wound up his troubled career in the peaceful practice of medicine. This famous writer must have been a familiar figure in the streets of London. He was tall and gaunt, perpetually stooped from shortness of sight, and, according to a sketch by a contemporary, wore two rings "dangling from his pierced ears when not in pawn".

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

If Needham was the first renegade editor, Roger L'Estrange was the first aristocrat to become a newspaper man. He flourished in the reign of Charles the Second, was made supreme licenser of all printed matter by his indulgent monarch, and promptly secured a good circulation for his own paper by crushing all other prints out of existence. But in spite of the ferocity with which he hunted down all rival sheets, the *Oxford Gazette* was established in 1665 when the king fled to the college city to escape the plague. "Odd's fish!" exclaimed the Merry Monarch, "there are no newspapers here!" Charles the Second has been severely handled by historians, but he ought to be kindly remembered by all journalists. He could not get along without his daily paper, and as he could not import L'Estrange, for fear the editor would bring the plague with him, he commanded Litchfield, the University printer, to establish the *Oxford Gazette*. This publication is often referred to as the first real paper published in England. When King Charles moved back to Whitehall, the *Oxford Gazette* became the *London Gazette*. As this paper enjoyed royal patronage, L'Estrange did not dare lift his hand against it, although he was savage at this infringement of his monopoly.

With the Revolution of 1688 L'Estrange disappeared, and the licenser's office became obsolete. This resulted in the publication of a number of sheets and the rise of some very capable journalists. In the days of William the Third and Queen Anne, the most brilliant of these writers was Daniel Defoe. He has often been called the father of English journalism, although, as I have already

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

shown, this distinction really belongs to Nathaniel Butter. To the majority of people to-day Defoe is known simply as the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, but with him story-writing was only a side-line. He was one of the greatest editors and one of the most interesting men that ever lived. He shared in all the political passions, intrigues and excitement of the pamphleteering journalism of his day. He lived through great political upheavals, for he wrote, schemed, and connived in the reigns of three monarchs, James II., William III., and Queen Anne. In one of his later writings, he says, "I have seen the rough side of the world as well as the smooth and have in less than half a year tasted the difference between the closet of a king and the dungeon of Newgate." He was a Horace Greeley, a Lord Northcliffe and a William Randolph Hearst rolled into one. I have not the time to sketch his adventurous life. He was the uncle by marriage of John and Charles Wesley and all his life a noted dissenter. His parents intended him for the ministry, but he compromised by being a local preacher on Sunday and an editor on week days. He was the first man to publish a paper for church children. He called it the *New Family Instructor* and this was the grandfather of the modern Sunday school paper. Early in Queen Anne's reign Defoe was constantly getting into trouble with the authorities. It was while he was serving a term in prison because of one of his daring pamphlets that he edited the *Review*, a publication which was extremely successful and had great influence with the public for many years. After his release he made a secret agreement to serve his natural enemies in politics and religion. From this time

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

onward he was accused of serving two masters, or at least pretending to. For this and other reasons one of his biographers has charged him with being "a great, a truly great liar, perhaps the greatest liar that ever lived." This prince of eighteenth century journalists, was, I fear, a trifle with truth, but he had a fertile, a most original mind. I am inclined to think that just as no journalist has eclipsed him in voluminous output and mastery of circumstantial detail, and in selecting subjects of topical interest and treating them in a realistic way, so no Englishman has minted so many new and great ideas. He was, for instance, the first journalist to advocate the following,—Free trade, good roads, education of women, a police system for cities, prison reform, licensed lunatic asylums, and fraternal societies. And the irony of fate is that this busy, big-brained, fearless publicist, journalist, preacher, and what-not is known today to ninety-nine people out of a hundred only as the author of a story book for children!

Although the great English journals, such as the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Morning Post* and the *Times*, did not appear until well on in the reign of George III. and the period of the American Revolution, the eighteenth century saw a great deal of brilliant writing and political controversy in the news sheets, which numbered among their contributors such great stylists as Swift, Bolingbroke, Addison, Steele, and Dr. Johnson. The whole century, however, will always be noted in the history of journalism for its battles for newspaper independence. Both in the old world and in the new, that stupid old German, George III., got himself into serious

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

trouble. By the passing of stamp acts and the prosecution of editors for seditious libel, he tried to throttle those organs of public opinion which dared to criticise the actions of the Government.

With the growth of political societies and clubs and the spread of education among the electors, the public began to take a constantly increasing interest in public affairs. Journalists sought to minister to this interest by publishing reports of parliamentary discussions. These had to be obtained by stealth, for the members of both houses were resolved to keep their proceedings secret. In 1771, six London printers were prosecuted for publishing accounts of debates. The magistrates of London, however, released the printers. Then the House of Commons sent the Lord Mayor to the Tower; but so great was the furore in London streets that he was released, and the House never again disputed the right of the press to publish its proceedings. The prosecution of John Wilkes, editor of the *North Briton*, and, later on, the attempt to suppress the letters of Junius were two of the leading episodes of that time in the stubborn struggle of journalists to criticise the conduct not of ministers or parliament only, but of the sovereign himself. The history of the final decades of the eighteenth century clearly shows that journalism, like religion, flourishes best of all in a period of persecution. For various offences, such as uttering seditious libels and seeking to evade the stamp tax, which was more a device to prevent newspapers from reaching the democracy than an attempt to increase the revenue of the Government (the stamp tax actually amounted to four pence on a single paper

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

by 1815), five hundred editors were imprisoned for longer or shorter terms during the reign of George III. But in old England every newspaper prosecution helped the cause of free speech, and in the colonies the odious stamp act taught editors to become critics of the Government. Perhaps more than anything else, these "taxes on knowledge" cost Great Britain the loss of her American colonies.

Great developments took place in the enlargement and perfection of the newspaper press during the nineteenth century. The stamp tax on newspapers, which at one time yielded the British Government the sum of two million dollars per annum, was, through the instrumentality of Bulwer Lytton, reduced, in 1836, to a penny on each paper but was not abolished until 1855. This distinct handicap to the press in England made it possible for the United States to lead in the establishment of the daily paper as a democratic institution. On September 28, 1814, the *London Times* was first printed with steam power at what was then regarded as the astounding rate of eleven hundred impressions per hour. It was an American mechanical genius, however, Robert M. Hoe, who invented the cylinder press, which was first used by the Philadelphia *Ledger* in 1846. Its capacity per hour was about eight thousand papers, printed one side only. Two years after this rotary press was in successful operation, the *London Times* said in an article that such a thing was impossible. Later, however, the *Times* was convinced that it had been done, and ordered from Hoe two of his ten-cylinder rotary presses. Fifteen years later, Charles Craske, a stereotyper working for the New

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

York *Tribune*, improved the papier-mache process, first used by the London *Times*, so that it became possible to print from curved stereotyped plates of whole pages. This revolutionized not only newspaper stereotyping but the construction of American printing presses, and enabled Hoe to further perfect what must be regarded as the greatest mechanical marvel of modern times.

Along with these improvements in printing went the spread of education. In his *History of England*, Charles Knight estimates that in 1837 "less than one half of the adult population of England could write and that less than three-fourths could read". But compared with the generation before, the progress in popular education was great. By 1853, the number of books published was three times as many as were printed twenty-five years before, and the average price per volume had been cut in two. But perhaps the increase of circulation of the London *Times* is as good an indication as any of this widening of the reading public. In 1814, when steam was first applied to the printing of this paper, the circulation was only about five thousand copies daily. In 1838 the reduction of the stamp tax to one penny, and its final removal in 1855 helped to increase the sale of the paper, but it was really the spread of education that brought the circulation of the *Times* to fifty thousand, and led to the establishment of a large number of penny papers in London by the middle of the century. By this time reading of newspapers and books had ceased to be an occupation of special classes and had spread to the rank and file of the people.

This democratization of knowledge was particularly rapid in the United States which led England in this

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

respect. As early as 1833 Horace Greeley tried to establish a one cent paper in New York. Where he failed, Benjamin Day succeeded. Day started the *Sun* on September 3, 1833. It was a small affair, consisting of four pages with three columns of ten inches to the page. A great deal of news, however, was boiled down and printed in this limited space, and the *Sun* soon became a formidable rival of the six-penny papers. The *Sun* made a special appeal to the masses because it was perhaps the first paper in the world to realize the value of the police court as a source of popular news.

Another editor who eclipsed Day in the art of catching popular favor was James Gordon Bennett who, in 1835, started the New York *Herald* with five hundred dollars, two wooden chairs, and an old dry-goods box. The *Herald* was not only a one cent morning paper, but a personal organ as well. Bennett loved to take the public into his confidence, blew his own horn regularly, abused his brother editors, filled columns of his paper with scandal, attacked the church, and did his best every day to shock the public. He went on the principle that the more he shocked people, the keener they would be to read his paper. He knew neither reticence nor personal shame. He announced his engagement to be married in an article so full of intimate details that it made his readers gasp. If one of the victims of his pen beat him up either in his office or on the street, he always gave a full report of the affair the next morning, under the standing head, "Bennett Thrashed Again". Bennett carried the privilege of a newspaper to praise itself, a privilege, by the way, which still exists, to the very limit, as will be seen

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

in the following editorial which appeared in the *Herald* in 1836. It is intensely interesting, but I know of nothing more spread-eagle in the whole history of journalism. "We published yesterday", he says "the principal items of the foreign news, received by the *Sheffield*, being eight days later than our previous arrivals. Neither the *Sun* nor the *Transcript* had a single item on the subject. The *Sun* did not even know of its existence. The large papers on Wall Street had also the news, but as the editors are lazy, ignorant, indolent, blustering blockheads one and all, they did not pick out the cream and serve it out as we did. The *Herald* alone knows how to dish up the foreign news, or indeed domestic events, in a readable style. Every reader, numbering between thirty and forty thousand daily, acknowledges this merit in the management of our paper. We do not, as the Wall Street lazy editors do, come down to our office about ten or twelve o'clock, pull out a Spanish cigar, take up a pair of scissors, puff and cut, cut and puff for a couple of hours, and then adjourn to Delmonico's to eat, drink, gormandize, and blow up our contemporaries. We rise in the morning at five o'clock, write our leading editorials, squibs, sketches, etc., before breakfast. From nine till one we read all our papers and original communications, the latter being more numerous than those of any other office in New York. From these we pick out facts, thoughts, hints and incidents, sufficient to make up a column of original spicy articles. We also give audiences to visitors, gentlemen on business, and some of the loveliest ladies in New York, who call to subscribe—Heaven bless them! At one we sally out among the gentlemen and loafers of Wall Street—find out

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

the state of the money market, return, finish the next day's paper—close every piece of business requiring thought, sentiment, feeling, or philosophy, before four o'clock. We then dine moderately and temperately—read our proofs, take in cash for advertisements, which are increasing like smoke—and close the day by going to bed always at ten o'clock, seldom later. That's the way to conduct a paper with spirit and success."

Horace Greeley, who founded the *Tribune* in 1841, became Bennett's great rival. Both these men were eccentric in their habits and indulged in furious diatribes against each other. For a generation both were regarded as the giants of the newspaper world. Greeley was the greater editorial writer, but Bennett was the greater editor of the two. It was Bennett more than anyone else who gave the New York newspaper and American journalism its characteristic stamp. His policy was: "In every species of news the *Herald* will be one of the earliest of the early." Enterprising as was the London *Times* under the editorship of Delane, it never came within hailing distance of the New York *Herald*, the *Tribune* or the *Sun*, as far as celerity in news gathering was concerned. The New York newspapers, with Bennett to set the pace, regarded speed, both in securing and printing news, as the supreme consideration.

Professor Morse of New York University began his experiments as early as 1832, but it was not until 1844 that Baltimore newspapers began to receive despatches from Washington by the magnetic telegraph. Up to that time, and in fact for some years later, until the telegraph wires extended widely over the country, Ben-

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

nett and his rivals had to depend upon pony expresses, carrier pigeons, steamboats, and the railway locomotive for the transmission of news. The pony express, as it was called, was first instituted in December, 1838, by the *Baltimore Sun*. The editor of that paper had one of his reporters bring, with the help of "a Canadian pony, as nimble as a goat and as swift as the wind", a copy of the President's message from Washington. Five minutes after its arrival it was distributed among forty-nine compositors. Two hours later it was printed and was being sold in a special edition on the streets of the city. The pony express then came to be commonly used, and messages were relayed in this way to New York and other cities.

Boat expresses were largely used by the New York papers to bring news, especially reports of important political speeches, from distant points. If a speech was made, say by Daniel Webster, in Albany or Boston, a steamboat would be chartered by the *Herald*, *Tribune* or *Sun*. Reporters would dash from the meeting to the boat, which would be waiting with steam up. On board would be a battery of compositors who would begin to put the speech into type as quickly as it was transcribed. One hour after the boat had landed at New York a special edition of the paper would be on the streets. From 1842 to 1847 the New York *Sun* spent over twenty thousand dollars on rail and steamboat expresses. Naturally it was an exciting thing to be a reporter on one of these speedy assignments and interesting stories were told of races between competitors. Before the cables were laid to Europe, American newspapers depended upon incoming

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

ships for their news of old-world events. So great was the competition to be first, that New York editors chartered locomotives to bring a budget of news from Boston when ships arrived in that port. On one occasion a *Tribune* reporter showed his enterprise by deliberately stealing an engine that had been chartered by the *Herald* at Boston and running away with it to New York, thus securing a great scoop for his paper.

It was the Baltimore *Sun* which scored another triumph by being the first to use carrier pigeons to carry news. The pigeon express flew from Washington to Baltimore. Bennett saw at once that this was an improvement on boats and railway trains. He soon had a coop on top of the *Herald* building and obtained news in this way from various cities. D. H. Craig, the man who first used this method of transmitting news in America, soon extended it to Boston and Halifax. When an English mail steamer was expected in Halifax, he would take some pigeons to that city, get the latest British papers, and then embark on a boat for Boston. During the trip he would go through the papers and summarize the news on thin manifold paper. When fifty miles from Boston he would liberate his pigeons. They would fly to the roof of the Boston *Daily Mail*. This paper would print a special edition for its own use, then run off another edition, after changing the title to that of the New York *Herald*. This would be shipped by a Long Island Sound steamer to New York, and James Gordon Bennett would be able to indulge in another editorial scream of triumph. It was characteristic of this editor, who sent Stanley to find Livingstone, that he offered Craig five hundred dollars an hour for

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

every hour that he could furnish the *Herald* with news ahead of rivals. Craig was very successful, and the other papers became so bitter that they even went so far as to hire snipers to bring down the feathered express.

The Franco-Prussian War and later the American Civil War resulted not only in a vast increase in the circulation of English and American newspapers but added heavily to the operating expenses. The London *Times* made a great name for itself because of its enterprise in securing war news. W. H. Russell of the *Times* and Archibald Forbes of the London *Daily News* not only performed a national service in this work but obtained world celebrity. During the American Civil War, Bennett alone spent half a million dollars on his war correspondence. Every army of the north had its tents, waggons, and representatives of the New York *Herald*. The New York newspapers also adopted all kinds of clever expedients to get news through from southern armies and even from military prisons. The treatment of political themes during this period by the leading newspapers both of London and New York gave the press greater power and prestige than it had ever attained before. I might say in passing that in supporting the southern cause, Delane, most famous of all editors of the London *Times*, put his money on the wrong horse, and made the greatest mistake in editorial judgment recorded in the history of journalism. On the other hand his editorials in support of the union cause lifted Horace Greeley into a place of such prominence and power as secured for him an immortality of fame. If it had not been for Greeley, it is not likely that Lincoln would either have been elected President or would

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

have been able to accomplish his mighty task of national deliverance.

I come now to a period in the history of journalism with which you are all familiar, the period between 1880 and 1900, when there occurred what is sometimes called the rise of a new journalism, first in the United States and Canada, and a decade or so later in England. During this epoch great changes and improvements took place. The cost of paper was greatly cheapened. In 1864 news print cost sixteen cents per pound. By 1875, owing to its manufacture from wood pulp, the price fell to eight cents per pound, and the price steadily decreased until 1897, when it was bought for one cent and a half per pound. The invention of the linotype machine abolished hand-setting, as far as solid matter was concerned. Printing machinery became more and more perfect, until forty thousand papers could be printed and folded in an hour. The telegraph and later the telephone covered the country with a net work of wires and new ocean cables facilitated and cheapened the transmission of news from Europe. News agencies multiplied and gave cheaper service. The cost of running a daily newspaper, however, became greater every year, owing to the increase in the size of the papers, the introduction of illustrations, and the aim of editors to spare no expense to outdo their rivals in securing a large circulation. Fortunately along with the tremendous increase in expense went the expansion of newspaper advertising. Patent medicine vendors were the first to see the advantage of daily publicity for their wares, but soon other business men became convinced of the value of newspaper space. Stores which used half a column of space

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

in 1880 were using a full page twenty years later, some of them paying as high as fifty thousand dollars a year to one big newspaper in order to reach its women readers. Incidentally it might be said that the manner in which advertising was set up and displayed also underwent great changes during this period until it became almost a fine art. In this respect the newspapers of England lagged, and still lag, far behind those of the United States and Canada.

As far as the reading matter in American newspapers is concerned, the period to which I refer saw a great increase in sensationalism. The advent of Pullitzer in 1885 and of Hearst in 1896 did not tend to the refinement of the press. Between them they developed what is called yellow journalism. It was their policy to comb New York, in fact the whole world, for stories of crime and every variety of scandal. The Sunday newspapers appeared shortly after the close of the Civil War, but they never came into their own until 1893, when the New York *World* installed a press capable of printing in colors. The success of the comic supplement was immediate. The circulation of the Sunday *World* rapidly jumped from a quarter to a half a million. As yellow was the favorite tint in the pictures in this Sunday supplement, the nickname of the *Yellow Press* came to be applied to these papers for the million.

It is not necessary for me to deal at any length with the history of the press during the present century. You are all familiar with the fact that the whole tone of journalism has greatly improved. "All the news that's fit to print" is the prevailing motto now-a-days. Prize fights still bulk large in the news columns, but police court news has

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

been greatly restricted, at least in the columns of the majority of American and Canadian newspapers. Few editors to-day would give any space to risque stories, as was the fashion in the last century. Someone has said that since 1900 we have been witnessing a feminization of newspapers. The lavish space given to social items of news and to women's affairs is one of the outstanding features of present-day journalism. The more refined and more wholesome tone of the whole paper is, I have no doubt, largely due to the fact that the editor remembers that he has a host of women readers. To offset the space devoted to women's interests, there has been an increase of late years in the attention given to sporting news. Even the sober-going English papers have gone in strongly for sporting extras, but here in Canada our papers carry what seems to me altogether too much of this kind of material, which interests, after all, probably only three readers in ten. During the last twenty years another notable feature of American and Canadian newspapers has been the purging of their advertising columns of patent medicine frauds and alluring notices of worthless mining and other stocks. The ethical standard which a big newspaper sets for itself to-day is vastly higher than it was in 1900.

What I regard as the greatest improvement in contemporary journalism is due not so much to the passing of rabid partisanship as to the ambition of the average editor to be a popular educator. He has been greatly helped by the rise of great syndicates which sell him medicinal, literary, historical, hygienic and religious pabulum at an amazingly cheap price, but he also seeks to develop good solid features prepared by members of his own staff.

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

In this connection English journalists have led the way. The meteoric careers of such men as Sir George Newnes and Lord Northcliffe and his two brothers are splendid illustrations of journalists who started in a humble way to meet the thirst for knowledge on the part of the general public.

And this leads me, in conclusion, to refer to perhaps the most spectacular feature of twentieth century journalism, at least as far as the metropolitan press is concerned. In this day of high wages and high cost of publication there is an increasing tendency for newspapers to pass into the hands of capitalists. Hearst of New York and Lord Northcliffe of London are outstanding figures who illustrate this trend of events in the newspaper world. Men like Northcliffe and Beaverbrook are able to make and unmake governments. Owing to the vast distances in this country and zone postal restrictions we need not fear any monopoly of the press on the part of capitalists with political ambitions or with more materialistic axes to grind, but if we are to believe Mr. A. G. Gardiner, once editor of the London *Daily News* and a very forceful writer, Northcliffe, Beaverbrook and other newspaper lords of London have already brought about what he calls "the twilight of Parliament." He charges them with being responsible for the decline of the British House of Commons. He declares that through their agency the Hon. Lloyd George has displaced the authority of Parliament and made himself more nearly a dictator than Great Britain has seen since the days of Cromwell. "These men are really very few," he says in a recent article in the *Atlantic Monthly*, "but between them they influence the

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

opinion and control the news-supply of nineteen twentieths of the people of the country. They are Lord Northcliffe, whom he (Lloyd George) made a Viscount; his brother Lord Rothermere, whom also he made a Viscount. A third brother, Sir Leicester Harmsworth, whom he made a Baronet; Mr. George Riddell of the *News of the World* whom he made Lord Riddell; the manager of the *Times*, Sir Stuart Campbell, whom he made a Knight, the manager of the *Mail* whom he made a Knight; Sir H. Dalziel of the *Daily Chronicle* and *Pall Mall*; Sir William Robertson Nicoll (also made a Knight), who, as editor of the *British Weekly*, keeps him right with the Non-conformist public; Sir Edward Hulbar, the owner of a great group of papers in London and Manchester (a Baronetcy for him); Lord Beaverbrook of the *Daily Express*, who was given a Peerage for engineering the overthrow of the Asquith ministry. There are others, but these are the leaders of the clique through which Mr. George rules England and, in larger degree than any man living, the continent of Europe."

This is all very interesting, but there is a greater power than that of politicians or of journalists, mighty though they be, and that is public opinion. And neither in Canada, England, nor any other country have newspaper readers been more intelligent or more independent than they are to-day. They will have no patience with a newspaper editor whom they suspect of being sordid or insincere. The Great War is largely responsible for this new attitude on the part of the public. And conversely it is true that never in the history of journalism has there been a greater opportunity than to-day for newspaper editors to wield a commanding influence, if they are outspoken, sincere, and

THE HISTORY OF JOURNALISM

devoted at all times to the cause of good government and the welfare of the community which it is their privilege to serve.

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